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LETTER OF E. B. WASHBURNE TO JOHN DIXON

(Letter from E. B. Washburne¹ to John Dixon. At the time the letter was written Mr. Washburne was Minister to France and previously had been Secretary of State and was from 1853 to 1869 Member of Congress from Illinois. Contributed by Mr. Henry S. Dixon, grandson of John Dixon.)

PARIS, December 15, 1874.

MR. JOHN DIXON,²

MY DEAR FRIEND:—

A few days ago I received a letter from Mr. Camp from whom I was pleased to learn that although you had passed your ninetieth year you continued to have excellent health and that you are in the enjoyment of your

¹ Elihu Benjamin Washburne, congressman and diplomatist, was born at Livermore, Maine, September 23, 1816; in early life he learned the trade of a printer, but graduated from Harvard law school and was admitted to the bar in 1840. Coming west he settled at Galena, forming a partnership with Charles S. Hempstead for the practice of law in 1841. He was a stalwart Whig, and as such, was elected to Congress in 1852. He continued to represent his district until 1869, taking a prominent position, as a Republican, on the organization of that party. On account of his long service he was known as the "Father of the House," administering the Speaker's oath three times to Schuyler Colfax and once to James G. Blaine. He was appointed Secretary of State by General Grant in 1869, but surrendered his portfolio to become envoy to France, in which capacity he achieved great distinction. He was the only official representative of a foreign government who remained in Paris during the siege of that city by the Germans (1870-71) and the reign of the "Commune." For his conduct he was honored by the governments of France and Germany alike. On his return to the United States he made his home in Chicago, where he devoted his latter years chiefly to literary labor, and where he died, October 22, 1887. He was strongly favored as a candidate for the presidency in 1880.

² John Dixon, pioneer—the first white settler in Lee county, Illinois, was born at Rye, Westchester county, N. Y., October 9, 1784; at 21, he removed to New York City. In 1820 he set out with his family for the west, traveling by land to Pittsburg, and thence by flat-boat to Shawneetown. Having disembarked his horses and goods there, he pushed out towards the northwest, passing the vicinity of Springfield, and finally locating on Fancy Creek, some nine miles north of the present site of that city. Here he remained some five years, in that time serving as

usual mental vigor. You must be very nearly the age of my father. He was ninety years old the 18th of last month. Not so fortunate as yourself, his sight and hearing are both impaired, but happily his faculties of mind are not affected and his bodily health is good. He is passing a happy old age in Livermore among the hills of Maine and in the "spot where I was born" enjoying the affection of his children and the respect of the people among whom he has lived for nearly three-quarters of a century. Like yourself he keeps up his interest in public affairs and is thoroughly posted in political matters. During his whole life he has always taken the greatest interest in politics. He represented my native town of Livermore, then in the "district of Maine," in the Great and General Court of Massachusetts several years before I was born when Timothy Bigelow was Speaker and Ben Russell Editor of the Old Boston Sentinel. You and my father are links connecting us with the earliest days of the republic. You were both born in the time of the old rickety confederation and before the adoption of the con-

foreman of the first Sangamon county grand jury. The new county of Peoria having been established in 1825, he was offered and accepted the appointment of circuit clerk, removing to Fort Clark, as Peoria was then called. Later he became contractor for carrying the mail on the newly established route between Peoria and Galena. Compelled to provide means for crossing Rock river, he induced a French and Indian half breed, named Ogee, to take charge of a ferry at a point afterwards known as Ogee's ferry. The tide of travel to the lead mine region caused both the mail route and ferry to prove profitable, and, as the half-breed ferryman could not stand prosperity, Mr. Dixon was forced to buy him out, removing his family to this point in April, 1830. Here he established friendly relations with the Indians, and, during the Black Hawk war, two years later, was enabled to render valuable service to the State. His station was for many years one of the most important points in northern Illinois, and among the men of national reputation who were entertained at different times at his home may be named Gen. Zachary Taylor, Albert Sidney Johnston, Gen. Winfield Scott, Jefferson Davis, Col. Robert Anderson, Abraham Lincoln, Col. E. D. Baker and many more. He bought the land where Dixon now stands in 1835 and laid off the town; in 1838 was elected by the Legislature a member of the Board of Public Works, and in 1840 secured the removal of the land office from Galena to Dixon. Col. Dixon was a delegate from Lee county to the Republican State Convention at Bloomington in May, 1856, and, although then considerably over 70 years of age, spoke from the same stand with Abraham Lincoln, his presence producing much enthusiasm. His death occurred July 6, 1876.

stitution. It was in your time that Washington was first elected president and the seat of government at Philadelphia and you must both recollect the purchase of Louisiana under the administration of Mr. Jefferson. My father voted for Mr. Madison for president and has voted for every president since. Probably you have done the same thing and voted for the very same candidates and what changes you have seen in your day and generation—more marvelous and wonderful than any ever recorded in all the annals of history, but I must not be drawn off into the consideration of such matters for they form no part of the purpose of this letter.

Your name is connected with the very earliest as well as my most recent associates in Illinois. When I first settled in Galena along in the year of 1840 Dixon was only known as "Dixon's Ferry," but from its location it had been a prominent point from the time of the Black Hawk War, "all of which you saw and part of which you was."

General Robert Anderson⁸ of whom I saw a great deal at Tours, France, in the summer of 1870, had a most vivid recollection of the rendezvous of the troops there at that time.

He was then a lieutenant in the regular army and in that capacity had mustered Abraham Lincoln into the United States service as a volunteer. You know all the prominent men who figured in that famous war. General Scott, Governor Reynolds (known as the old ranger),

⁸ General Robert Anderson, soldier, born at "Soldiers' Retreat," near Louisville, Ky., June 14, 1805, died in Nice, France, October 27, 1871. He graduated at West Point in 1825. He served in the Black Hawk War of 1832 as colonel of the Illinois Volunteers. Subsequently he was attached to the staff of General Scott, as assistant Adjutant-General, and was promoted to captain in 1841. He served in the Mexican War, and was severely wounded at Moline del Roy. In 1857 he was appointed major of the 1st Artillery, and on November 20, 1860, he assumed command of the troops in Charleston harbor, with headquarters at Fort Moultrie. He was appointed brigadier-general in the U. S. army by President Lincoln. Retired from active service October 27, 1863. He was the hero of Fort Sumter.

General Henry,⁴ Col. Dodge,⁵ Col. Strode⁶ and so many others.

⁴ James D. Henry, pioneer and soldier, was born in Pennsylvania, came to Illinois in 1822, locating at Edwardsville; removed to Springfield in 1826, and was soon after elected sheriff; served in the Winnebago War (1827) as adjutant, and, in the Black Hawk War (1831-32) as lieutenant colonel and colonel, finally being placed in command of a brigade at the battle of Wisconsin and the Bad Axe, his success in both winning for him great popularity. His exposures brought on disease of the lungs, and going south he died at New Orleans March 4, 1834.

⁵ Colonel Henry Dodge, soldier, born in Vincennes, Indiana, October 12, 1782, died in Burlington, Iowa, June 19, 1867. He commanded a mounted company of volunteer riflemen in August and September, 1812, became a major of Louisiana militia under General Howard on September 28th, major in McNair's regiment of Missouri militia in April, 1813, and commanded a battalion of Missouri infantry as lieutenant colonel from August till October, 1814. He was colonel of Michigan volunteers from April till July, 1832, during the Black Hawk War. He was commissioned major of the United States Rangers June 21, 1832, and became the first colonel of the 1st Dragoons March 4, 1833. He was successful in making peace with the frontier Indians in 1834, and in 1835 commanded an important expedition to the Rocky mountains.

General Dodge was unsurpassed as an Indian fighter, and a sword with the thanks of the nation was voted him by Congress. He resigned from the army June 4, 1836, having been appointed by President Jackson governor of Wisconsin Territory and Superintendent of Indian Affairs. He held this office until 1841, when he was elected delegate to Congress as a Democrat, and served two terms. In 1846 he was again made governor of Wisconsin, and after that state's admission into the Union was one of its first United States Senators. He was re-elected and served altogether from June 23, 1848, till March 3, 1857.

⁶ Colonel James M. Strode, a Kentuckian by birth, attorney for the fifteen northern counties of the State of Illinois in the time of Judge R. M. Young, Benjamin Mills and others, resided for sometime in southern Illinois, and then went to Galena. State Senator from 1832 to 1836, from Cook county as well as a number of the other northern counties, with his residence at Galena. Registrar of the land office in Chicago from 1836 to 1840. Member of the Chicago bar and prosecuting attorney from about 1844 to 1848. He was identified with the bar of Jo Daviess, Cook and McHenry counties.

He was a great patron of the drama, and his name is attached to a letter signed by the leading citizens of Chicago addressed to Alexander McKinzie dated October 3, 1838, in which they express their high appreciation of Mr. McKinzie's efforts to entertain the people by a series of theatrical performances.

He seems to have formed at an early date a very exaggerated idea of the prowess of the Indians, and among the earliest things mentioned of him was in 1832, when he accompanied Judge Young to Chicago from Galena to hold court, that he and Benjamin Mills brought the first intelligence of the atrocities of the Indians on Rock river, and most of the anecdotes extant of him relate in some way to his connection with the aborigines.

You must have known Mrs. Washburne's father, Col. Henry Gratiot,⁷ of Gratiot's Grove, who was at that time the agent of the Winnebagoes. He was taken prisoner by the Prophet's Band of Indians, and imprisoned in his village on Rock River, the present site of Prophetstown, Whiteside county.

About the first time I ever heard particularly about Dixon's Ferry was in the early summer of 1840. The land office had not then been removed there from Galena where it had been so long located and which was then kept in a little frame building on the east side of Fever River. If I mistake not your fellow citizens, Col. John Dement,⁸

He was a commander of the militia of Jo Daviess county in the Black Hawk War. Colonel Strode was tall and straight and prided himself upon his Kentucky ancestry. He was in many respects a typical southern pioneer. Died while residing in McHenry county.

⁷ Henry Gratiot, second son of Charles Gratiot, born at St. Louis, Mo., April 25, 1789; moved to Fevre River Lead Mines, now Galena, Illinois, October, 1825, on account of his aversion to slavery and a desire to bring up his family in a free state. Married June 21, 1813, Susan, daughter of Stephen Hempstead, a revolutionary soldier and one of the earliest (1811) emigrants from Connecticut to St. Louis, Upper Louisiana Territory—Father of Hon. Edward Hempstead, first delegate in Congress from Missouri Territory, and of Charles S. Hempstead, one of Galena's early lawyers, as well as of William Hempstead, a prominent and influential merchant of early Galena.

Henry Gratiot, with a younger brother, Jean Pierre Bugnion Gratiot, were among the first to develop the Fevre River lead mines, and for a long time maintained a large mining and smelting business at Gratiot's Grove, now in LaFayette county, Wisconsin; enjoying the Indians' confidence, he was enabled to exert great influence over them during the Black Hawk War, rendering inestimable services to the entire white population. Died at Barnum's Hotel, Baltimore, Md., April 27, 1836. His only surviving daughter, Adele, married the Hon. E. B. Washburne. His four sons were Charles H. Gratiot, Lieutenant Colonel Edward Hempstead Gratiot, Henry Gratiot and Stephen Hempstead Gratiot.

⁸ John Dement, was born in Sumner county, Tenn., in April, 1804. When thirteen years old he accompanied his parents to Illinois, settling in Franklin county, of which he was elected sheriff in 1826, and which he represented in the General Assemblies of 1828 to '30. He served with distinction in the Black Hawk War, having previously had experience in two Indian campaigns. In 1831 he was elected State Treasurer by the Legislature, but, in 1836, resigned this office to represent Fayette county in the General Assembly and aid in the fight against the removal of the capital to Springfield. His efforts failing of success, he removed to the northern part of the State, finally locating at Dixon, where he became extensively engaged in manufacturing. In 1837 President VanBuren appointed him Receiver of Public Moneys, but

was the receiver, and col. Samuel Hackelton,⁹ Register Hackelton was afterwards a member of the Legislature from Fulton county and Speaker of the House in the session of 1842-3.

It was in June, 1840, that there was a big Whig convention held at Dixon's Ferry to nominate candidates for the Legislature to represent a district composed of some ten or fifteen counties in the northwestern part of the State. Counties which now have population enough to send two members to Congress.

Drummond,¹⁰ now Judge of the United States Circuit Court, and Horster "the blacksmith" of Millersburg, Mercer county, Illinois, were nominated and elected by a large majority. Tom Campbell,¹¹ of Galena, and Dr.

he was removed by President Harrison in 1841; was re-appointed by Polk in 1845, only to be again removed by Taylor in 1849, and re-appointed by Pierce in 1853. He held the office from that date until it was abolished. He was a Democratic Presidential Elector in 1844; served in three Constitutional Conventions (1847, '62 and '70), being temporary president of the two bodies last named. He was the father of Hon. Henry D. Dement, Secretary of State of Illinois from 1884 to 1888. He died at his home at Dixon, January 16, 1883.

⁹ Samuel Hackelton, of Fulton county, H. R. 8th, 9th and 13th, Senate, 10th and 11th General Assemblies. Speaker House of Representatives 1842-44. Presidential Elector 1836.

¹⁰ Thomas Drummond was born at Bristol Mills, Lincoln county, Maine, October 16, 1809. After graduating from Bowdoin college in 1830, he studied law at Philadelphia, where he was admitted to the bar in 1833. He settled at Galena in 1835, and was a member of the General Assembly in 1840-41. In 1850 he was appointed United States District Judge for the District of Illinois as successor to Judge Nathaniel Pope, and four years later removed to Chicago. Upon the division of the State into two judicial districts, in 1855, he was assigned to the northern. In 1869 he was elected to the bench of the United States Circuit Court, and presided over the Seventh Circuit, which at that time included the states of Indiana, Illinois and Wisconsin. In 1884, at the age of 75, he resigned, living in retirement until his death, which occurred at Wheaton, Illinois, May 15, 1890.

¹¹ Thompson Campbell, born at Kennet Square, Chester county, Pa. Entered Jefferson college at Canonsburg, Pa. After finishing his college course, went to Pittsburg and read law. Admitted to the bar and began the practice of law.

Being attracted to the far west, he removed to Galena, Illinois. Appointed Secretary of State by Governor Thomas Ford in 1843, but resigned in 1846, and became a delegate to the Constitutional Convention in 1847, in 1850 was elected as a Democrat to Congress from the Galena district, but defeated for re-election in 1852 by E. B. Washburne. He was then appointed by President Pierce commissioner to look after cer-

Van Valzeb,¹² of Freeport, were the Democratis nominees Drummond and Campbell canvassed the district together on horseback and carrying their duds in saddle bags.

A lively retinue of Whigs went down to that convention from Jo Daviess county but I was not of them, only having put out my shingle as a lawyer a few weeks before at Galena. I well recollect when the Galena delegates left in their lumber wagons for the long journey and they departed with songs and shoutings and banners. When they got home they told of the glorious time they had and what a magnificent repast Sample M. Turney had provided for them at Elk Horn Grove¹³ when on their return. When I think of all the good things we had to eat in those good old times I feel like showing my Paris cook the door.

My early visits to Dixon's Ferry were going to Dixon from Springfield and returning in the winter time. For many years I attended the winter sessions of the Supreme Court at Springfield and now after a lapse of more than thirty years I shudder when I think of those dreadful stage rides. The distance as we travelled was between 300 and 400 miles and *such roads*. The old saying "that the passengers walked and carried fence rails" was very nearly verified. I recollect one trip when we

tain land grants by the Mexican government in California, removing to that state in 1853, but resigned this position about 1855, to engage in general practice. In 1860 was candidate for Presidential Elector-at-large on the Breckenridge ticket; in 1861 returned to California, and on the outbreak of the Civil War became a zealous champion of the Union cause, by his speeches exerting a powerful influence upon the destiny of the state. He also served in the California Legislature during the war, and, in 1864, was a member of the Baltimore Convention which nominated Mr. Lincoln for the presidency, a second time assisting most ably in the subsequent campaign to carry the State for the Republican ticket.

Died in San Francisco, December 6, 1868.

¹² Error should be VanValzah. Dr. Thomas VanValzah settled on a claim within the present site of the village of Cedarville, Stephenson county, which he purchased of John Goddard, and at once began the erection of a saw and grist mill. These were completed in November, 1837, and were the first of the kind in Stephensen county. (History of Stephenson County, Ill., Tilden, Chicago, 1880, p. 247.)

¹³ Elkhorn Grove, now in Carroll county, Illinois.

left Galena at nine o'clock on a Wednesday evening with nine passengers in the coach and only arrived at Springfield on the afternoon of the next Sunday, never getting off a walk and only stopping long enough to change horses. Ordinarily leaving Galena about four o'clock in the morning we could reach Dixon's Ferry between 1 and 2 o'clock the next morning. There was then but a single house on the north side of Rock River, arriving there our shivering driver would toot his horn to awaken the sleepy ferryman on the other side of the Jordan, after long and weary waiting we could at length get over the river and finally roll out half asleep and half awake at the old stage tavern where we were always welcomed by a genial fire and a warm room. Sometimes the weather was fearfully cold on those trips. I never came so near perishing as I did in the winter of 1843, on a night ride from Princeton to Dad Joe's Grove¹⁴ in an open sleigh. The piercing wind swept over the long bleak unsettled prairies with a tremendous power. When we at length reached Dad Joe's log cabin, passengers, driver and horses had well nigh perished. It was always a particu-

¹⁴ "Dad Joe" Smith. About eighteen or twenty miles south of Dixon and not far from the present Lee county line, in the south part of the county, "Dad Joe" Smith, pioneer, located, the date of which can not be definitely given, but it was, however, prior to the Black Hawk War, and of sufficient length of time for him to become familiar with the Indians of the country to secure his safety during the Black Hawk campaign. Having secured the safety of his wife and children he remained at his home at "Dad Joe's Grove," and attended and gathered his crops during the entire war unmolested. He had fought in the battle of the Thames; came to this country with the first emigrants and "settled in the shadow of this grove," and commenced opening a farm. At the time of the advance of Atkinson's army he served as a guide. He also served as a spy under command of Zachary Taylor. He was an early settler, and of such long standing that he was rather looked upon as a kind of patriarch in the country, and to distinguish him from other Joe Smiths—perhaps a son bearing his father's name—he received the venerable appellation of "Dad Joe." He was one of the good, jolly men, who had made their homes along the route of the early thoroughfare between Peoria and Galena.

"Dad Joe's" Grove, Jo Daviess county, twenty miles south on the Galena road, one of the stations on the great thoroughfare of travel from the southern settlements to the Galena mines in the north and were as oases in the desert to the pioneer traveler.

larly hard ride from Galena to Dixon until you got to Cherry Grove.¹⁵ It was all up and down hill and the roads were simply horrible. The first change was at Elizabeth, the second at Mitchell's old place, the third at Cherry Grove, and the fourth and last at Buffalo Grove.¹⁶ It was about 16 miles over the prairie between these two last named points and for many years after I began travelling over that route there was not a farm or a human inhabitant on that prairie.

I have crossed it in the stage in the night in a drifting snow storm and a certain sense of danger crept over us that the driver might lose the track. It was an unbroken prairie desolate beyond description in the winter, but supremely beautiful in the leafy month of June, wreathed in and fragrant with the most lovely wild flowers. I can recall no more exquisite enjoyment than I used to have in riding over the prairie on a delightful summer day in a light buggy drawn by two fleet horses.

You must recollect the sharp competition that was long up between different stage companies in the year 1841, 1842, 1843, as the travel increased between Galena and Chicago.

John D. Winters, of Elizabeth, was the old mail contractor and the stage proprietor, but the field he had so long occupied undisturbed was at length invaded. Frink and Walker put on an opposition line. They had Troy coaches, good horses and experienced drivers. The time was shortened and staging became more tolerable and Winters seeing this invasion by the "Yankees" he became furious and a stage war was inaugurated which raged with a terrible violence. People all along the route took sides but at the Galena end they were mostly on the side of Winters who was an old settler and had brought their mails to them for so many years. When I first went to Galena we only had a tri-weekly mail from Chicago

¹⁵ Cherry Grove, now in Carroll county, Illinois.

¹⁶ Nanusha or Buffalo Grove, now Polo, Ogle county, Illinois.

which came by way of Dixon's Ferry. We usually took from fifteen to twenty days to get papers and letters from New York. I was the first subscriber to the New York Daily Tribune in Galena, and at a time when I could only get it three times a week. Hand bills flew thick and fast and posters were seen everywhere. The companies mutually denounced each other. Frink had a brake to all his coaches, which was something never before heard of in that far off northwest. Winters denounced it as a "Damn Yankee contrivance," saying he wanted nothing to hold his horses back in going down the hill, but unfortunately for Winters in one of his hand bills when referring to the beauties of travel over his line he spoke of the pleasure it would be to the travelers to be taken "leisurely over the prairies." Frink saw his advantage, caught up the expression and made a great card of it. He published a counter hand bill, ridiculed the old broken down horses of Winters and proclaimed that the stages of his company's line did not go "leisurely over the prairies," but drawn by his splendid teams space was almost annihilated. The result of all this business was a violent personal assault by Winters on Frink in the bar-room of the old American House at Galena.

Frink and Winters were both remarkable men in their way and both made a certain impression on their time in Illinois. All of our old settlers remember them well. Frink was a Massachusetts man, began life as a stage driver and come to the west at an early day. A man of limited education and without cultivation, yet he was a man of strong mind, wonderful natural intelligence, indomitable will, great sagacity and a remarkable knowledge of human nature. I never knew a man who could so readily and accurately take the measure of another man. Winters had many of the traits of Frink. He was from either Kentucky or Tennessee and had come up from the ranks. An early settler of the lead mines. His character was somewhat shaped by the state of society

then existing. I think he had more education than Frink but not so much actual intellect nor was he so long headed. He was impetuous, sometimes violent, very pronounced in his opinions and always expressing himself in language of great vigor. He was a vehement Democrat and never failed to make known the faith which was within him. While Frink was a Whig but more careful in expressing his opinions and subordinating politics to staging. Frink has been dead many years and I believe Winters is no longer living. He emigrated a long time ago to California and became blind. I am sometimes saddened when I think how the recollections of so many marked men among our early settlers are to die out. Your own reminiscences would be intensely interesting. You have known so many of the public men of our State, Governors, Senators, Congressmen, Judges, legislators and lawyers and so many of the old pioneers.

I do not remember when Lee county was organized,* but it must have been long after you located on Rock River. You knew well all of the prominent lawyers who practiced at the Lee county bar in the earliest days. Butterfield¹⁷ and Collins¹⁸ of Chicago used to attend your

* Lee county organized February 27, 1839, from Ogle county.

¹⁷ Justin Butterfield, born at Keene, N. H., in 1790, educated at the common schools and prepared by the local minister for college, entered Williams college in 1807, and in about 1810 began the study of law under Judge Egbert Ten Eyck, at Watertown, N. Y. Was admitted to the bar in 1812. Began the practice of law in Adams, Jefferson county, N. Y. He practiced some years in Sackett's Harbor, where he married in 1814. He removed to New Orleans where he quickly obtained a lucrative practice and high rank in his profession. In 1826 he returned to Jefferson county, N. Y., settling this time at Watertown, N. Y., where he remained several years.

In 1835 he removed to Chicago, Illinois, forming a law partnership with James H. Collins in July 16, 1835. Mr. Butterfield soon became a recognized leader not only at the bar but in the broader relations of civil life. He was one of the trustees of Rush Medical College at its incorporation March 25, 1837.

Butterfield and Collins came to be recognized as at the head of the bar not alone in Chicago but in the State. In 1841 Mr. Butterfield was made prosecuting attorney for the United States Judicial District, which he held until the election of President Polk. In 1843 the partnership between Butterfield and Collins was dissolved, and a new firm established, Mr. Butterfield taking into partnership his son, Justin

court, both men of talent and able lawyers. Butterfield stood at the very head of the bar in the State in his time. His sayings and doing, his witticisms and his sarcasms will long be remembered.

You may recollect the incident at Whiteside county court when the county seat was at Sterling. Some old chap had a suit in court, but he did not want to pay the expense of employing a lawyer. He went around therefore to all the lawyers under pretense of employing

Butterfield, Jr., and a law student, Erastus S. Williams, better known in later years as Judge Williams of the Circuit Court of Cook county. June 21, 1849, after the reaccession of the Whigs to power Mr. Butterfield was appointed Commissioner of the General Land Office by President Taylor. A competitor for the position at that time was Abraham Lincoln, who was beaten it is said by the superior dispatch of Butterfield in reaching Washington by the Northern Route, but more correctly by the paramount influence of his friend Daniel Webster. In fact, Lincoln was then, or had recently been in Washington as a member of the 30th Congress and had the indorsement of the Illinois delegation, but the pressure of Mr. Webster was irresistible. While in this office he co-operated zealously with Senator Douglas toward securing for Illinois the land grant which became the subsidy of the Illinois Central Railroad, and indirectly through the seven per cent of its gross earnings made payable by its charter to the State, an efficient aid in restoring the credit of the commonwealth and finally extinguishing its indebtedness. He held the position of Land Commissioner until disabled by paralysis in 1852. He died in Chicago October 23, 1855.

¹⁸ James H. Collins, born in Cambridge, Washington county, N. Y., in 1799. When a child his parents removed to Vernon, Oneida county, in the same state, where he grew to manhood. His education was obtained in the district schools in the neighborhood, with a couple of years at an academy, and at the age of eighteen he began the study of law with Green C. Bronson, afterward Chief Justice of New York. He was admitted to the bar as an attorney in 1824 and as counselor and solicitor in 1827. After his admission as an attorney he opened an office at Vernon for the practice of his profession, remaining there until the fall of 1833, when he started for Illinois, and on his journey was a passenger in the first stage coach which made the trip from Detroit to Chicago. After reaching Chicago he made quite a tour of observation over the adjacent country, but finally returned to Chicago in the spring of 1834 selected it as his future home. Soon after this he formed a partnership with Mr. Caton under the firm name of Collins & Caton, which continued about two years, when the firm was dissolved and Mr. Collins formed a partnership with Justin Butterfield as Butterfield & Collins.

Mr. Collins' best field was as a chancery lawyer. Probably the bar of Chicago has never known a man more thoroughly learned in this branch of the law than Mr. Collins. When he died in 1854 it was stated that, while he had the largest chancery practice of any man in the State he had never lost a chancery case.

them but in reality to get all the information he could out of them with a view to attending to his case himself. Among others he attempted to pump Butterfield who at once saw his drift and determined to play off on him. He called for the papers in the case and apparently looked them over with great care. In the meantime the suitor behind the bar was looking on very anxiously, taking a sheet of paper Butterfield entitled the cause in regular form, wrote the words "Absque hoc" and signed his name. He then very solemnly returned the papers to the clerk. Soon after the anxious suitor himself sought the papers to ascertain what the distinguished lawyer had been doing. Reading what were to him the cabalistic and mysterious words "Absque hoc," he was utterly at a loss to comprehend what wily stratagem might be hidden beneath them. It was not long before he employed Mr. Butterfield to attend to his suit. The Galena lawyers of that day also attended the Lee county courts. Hempstead,¹⁹ Drummond, Hoge²⁰ and Campbell,

¹⁹ Charles S. Hempstead, pioneer lawyer and first mayor of Galena, was born at Hebron, Toland county, Conn., September 10, 1794, the son of Stephen Hempstead, a patriot of the Revolution. In 1809 he came west in company with a brother, descending the Ohio river in a canoe from Marietta to Shawneetown and making his way across the "Illinois Country" on foot to Kaskaskia, and finally to St. Louis, where he joined another brother, Edward, with whom he soon began the study of law. Having been admitted to the bar in both Missouri Territory and Illinois, he removed to St. Genevieve, where he held the office of prosecuting attorney by appointment of the Governor, but returned to St. Louis in 1818-19, and later became a member of the Missouri Legislature. In 1829 Mr. Hempstead located at Galena, Illinois, which continued to be his home for the remainder of his life, and where he was one of the earliest and best known lawyers. Mr. E. B. Washburne became a clerk in Mr. Hempstead's law office in 1840, and in 1845 a partner. Mr. Hempstead was one of the promoters of the Chicago & Galena Union Railroad (now a part of the Chicago & Northwestern) serving upon the first board of directors; was elected mayor of Galena in 1841, and in the early days of the Civil War, was appointed by President Lincoln a paymaster in the army. Died in Galena December 10, 1874.

²⁰ Joseph P. Hoge, born in Ohio early in the century and came to Galena, Illinois, in 1836, where he attained prominence as a lawyer. In 1842 he was elected Representative in Congress, as claimed at the time by the aid of the Mormon vote at Nauvoo, serving one term. In 1853 he went to San Francisco, Cal., and became a judge in that state, dying a few years later at the age of over 80 years. He is represented to have been a man of much ability and a graceful and eloquent orator. Mr. Hoge was a son-in-law of Thomas C. Browne, one of the justices of the first Supreme Court of Illinois, who held office until 1848.

men who would adorn the bar of any country. I never attended a term of the court at Dixon, but you may remember speeches made at a meeting during the land sale in the spring of 1847, and just after the battle of Buena Vista, at which we nominated General Taylor for president. It was the first meeting in the whole country to make that nomination.

W. W. Fuller,²¹ of Oregon, was known to you, a very able lawyer and one of the most accomplished scholars ever at the bar in our State. He was a Massachusetts man and was past middle age when he came west and located at "Oregon City," as it was then called and very soon after the county seat of Ogle county had been established there. He was then an unmarried man. He seemed to have tired of the artificial state of society in New England and sought seclusion in what was then a remote part of the country. His family was a celebrated one. Several of his brothers were eminent lawyers and one, the Honorable Timothy J. Fuller,²² was a dis-

²¹ William W. Fuller, born at Princeton, Mass., Aug. 4, 1792, graduated from Harvard college in 1813, and became a member of the legal profession in 1817. Located in Oregon, Ogle county, Illinois, where he began the practice of law in 1839; his fine mental endowments and genial manners soon gained for him fame and friends. Aug. 16, 1840, he married Miss Mary Fletcher, who died December 5, 1841. March 3, 1847, Mr. Fuller was married to Miss Almira M. Robertson, preceptress of Rock River Seminary. Mr. Fuller died August 17, 1849.

²² Timothy Fuller, congressman, born in Chilmark, Martha's Vineyard, Mass., July 11, 1778, died in Groton, Mass., October 1, 1835. His father, Timothy, the first settled minister of Princeton, Mass., was third in descent from Thomas, who emigrated from England in 1638. The younger Timothy was graduated at Harvard in 1801 with the second honors. After teaching in Leicester Academy, he studied law with Levi Lincoln, and practiced successfully in Boston. He was a state senator in 1813-16 and was then elected to Congress as an anti-federalist, serving from January 2, 1818, till March 3, 1825. He was speaker of the state House of Representatives in 1825, a member of the executive council in 1828, and in 1831 was a member of the Legislature from Groton, whither he had removed about 1826. While in Congress he was chairman of the Committee on Naval Affairs, and was distinguished as an orator, making effective speeches in behalf of the Seminole Indians, and against the Missouri Compromise. He was an ardent supporter of John Quincy Adams, and published a pamphlet entitled "The Election for the Presidency Considered," which was widely circulated. Mr. Fuller was a hard-working lawyer, and an active and public-spirited man. He died suddenly of cholera, intestate and insolvent. Besides

tinguished member of Congress from the old bay state. Margaret Fuller, Countess D'Ossoli, the most gifted marked authoress of the day was his niece. For many years he lived a very quiet and secluded life and little was known of him but his ability as a lawyer eventually brought him into notice, and at the time of his death he had a very large practice. When I visited Oregon for the first time in June, 1841, I found him occupying a little frame building on the side of the bluff near Rock River which served him as a law office and a place to sleep. He was a man of great reading, of ready wit and with a personal appearance and carriage that stamped him as a man of no ordinary character.

Of the younger chief lawyers who attended your early courts Lisle Smith,²³ George W. Meeker,²⁴ Tracey and

the work mentioned above he published an oration given at Watertown, July 4, 1809, and an address before the Massachusetts Peace Society (1826).

²³ Samuel Lisle Smith, born in Philadelphia, 1817, studied law at Yale and passed the examination entitling him to a diploma or license to practice before he was of sufficient age to receive it. In 1836 he came to Illinois to look after the interests of his father who owned some choice tracts of land near Peru. Returned to the east and married Miss Potts, of Philadelphia. In 1838 he came west and settled in Chicago. He made his headquarters in the office of Butterfield & Collins, where he familiarized himself with the laws of Illinois. In 1839 was chosen city attorney. He was at this time at the very height of his reputation as an orator. Hon. Isaac N. Arnold, one of his hearers at the Whig state convention at Springfield in 1840, thus refers to his powers: "I heard for the first time stump speeches from Lincoln, Hardin, Baker and others, but the palm of eloquence was conceded to a young Chicago lawyer, S. Lisle Smith. I have heard Webster and Choate and Crittenden and Bates of Missouri, they were all greatly his superiors in power and vigor, and in their various departments of excellence, but for an after-dinner speech, a short eulogy or commemorative address, or upon any occasion where the speech was a part of the pageant, I never heard the equal of Lisle Smith."

In 1844 he took an active interest in the presidential campaign, the third attempt of the Whigs to elect Henry Clay, of whom he was a admirer and supporter. In 1847, at the River and Harbor Convention at Chicago, he signally distinguished himself among some of the best speakers of the nation. Horace Greeley said he was "the star of the vast assembly, and stood without a rival"; and Henry Clay did not hesitate to write that Mr. Smith "was the greatest orator he had ever heard." Died of cholera July 30, 1854.

²⁴ George W. Meeker, born in Elizabethtown, N. J., 1817, from infancy one of his limbs was paralyzed, so that he always had to use crutches. He was well educated and possessed a good knowledge of French

E. G. Ryan,²⁵ The last named now Chief Justice of Wisconsin. They were all men of brilliant talents and of the most captivating personal qualities. The three died many years ago. Mr. Ryan at that early day gave evidence of that ability which has since distinguished him as a lawyer and a judge.

My relations with Smith, Meeker and Tracey were of the most intimate character. There was another young man who was not a lawyer but who was a devoted friend of us all whom you must have known for he was a great deal in our part of the State in connection with post office business. I refer to Richard L. Wilson,²⁶ one of the early

and Greek and Latin. He came to Chicago in 1837, studied with Spring & Goodrich and was admitted to the bar in 1839, and soon afterwards formed a partnership with Mr. Manierre. He was for a time clerk of the United States Court and was for many years United States Court Commissioner. He was considered a very fine lawyer, was well versed in the statute law of the state and especially the statutes of the United States, and was an authority on all points of practice arising in the Federal courts. He died suddenly in April, 1856.

²⁵ Edward George Ryan, jurist, was born in County Meath, Ireland, November 13, 1810. He began the study of law before coming to the United States in 1830, and continued it in New York while teaching school, and was admitted to the bar in 1836. He was an editor on the Chicago Tribune, 1839-41, and then removed to Wisconsin, settling in 1842 at Racine, and in 1848 in Milwaukee, where he became one of the most powerful advocates of the Wisconsin bar. He was a delegate to the State Constitutional Convention in 1846, and to the Democratic National Convention in 1848. In 1862, as chairman of a committee of the Democratic State Convention, he drew up an address to the people of his state, which became known as the "Ryan Address." He was city attorney of Milwaukee, 1870-72, and in 1874, succeeded Luther S. Dixon as chief justice of the state, holding that office until his death, which occurred in Milwaukee October 19, 1880.

²⁶ Richard Lush Wilson, editor and publisher of the Chicago Evening Journal, the oldest paper of consecutive publication in Chicago, was a native of New York, coming to Chicago with his brother, John L., in 1834, they soon after established themselves in business on the Illinois and Michigan canal, then in course of construction. In 1844 he took charge of the Chicago Daily Journal, for a publishing committee which had purchased the material of the Chicago American, but soon after became proprietor. In April, 1847, while firing a salute in honor of the victory of Buena Vista, he lost an arm and was otherwise injured by the explosion of the cannon. Early in 1849 he was appointed by President Taylor postmaster of Chicago, but, having failed of confirmation, was compelled to retire in favor of a successor appointed by Millard Fillmore, eleven months later. Mr. Wilson published a little volume in 1842 entitled "A Trip to Santa Fe," and a few years later a story of travel under the title, "Short Ravellings from a Long Yarn."

Died December, 1856.

proprietors of the Chicago Journal and afterwards postmaster of Chicago, a man whose rare qualities of head and heart drew around him a host of friends. Those who survive him hold his memory in respect and affection.

But it has been in the field of politics that I have known you so well, first as a Whig, like myself, and then as a Republican. I can never forget what a true, personal and political friend you have been to me always. After Lee county fell into the third district you scarcely ever failed to attend congressional conventions and always an unswerving supporter. I cherish with gratitude the recollection of all your kindness to me. Neither will the recollection of all the kindness and devotion of my old constituents, in both congressional districts ever be effaced from my memory. No man ever represented a more generous or indulgent constituency nor one more distinguished for intelligence and patriotism. In all the nine canvasses I made running through eighteen years there was never a cottage, or a farm house or a cabin in either district where I was not welcomed with the most cordial and genuine hospitality.

In looking over the many pages I have written already I am admonished that I have extended my letter to an inordinate length. But I confess to a weakness for the reminiscences of my professional and political life among the people with whom my lot was happily cast and among whom I have had my home for five and thirty years. I have no friendship for the life over here and the time is not far distant I hope when I shall be back again among the old friends.

And now my dear friend accept my earnest and heartfelt wishes for your continued health and for that happiness which is the just reward of a long life spent in good deeds and which has never been stained by any single act of dishonor, but which has been illustrated by those virtues which most adorn our common humanity.

Will you be kind enough to remember me to the old
friends in Lee county and believe that I am as ever most
faithfully your friend,

E. B. WASHBURN.